

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ALGIER 01183 121618Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SY-05 MCT-01 OMB-01 /063 W
-----122155Z 063643 /13
R 121400Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6430
INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 1183

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, AG
SUBJECT: ALGIERS UNIVERSITY STUDENT STRIKE ENDS QUIETLY

REF: ALGIERS 1117

1. STUDENT SOURCE HAS INFORMED US THAT STRIKE
IN VARIOUS FACULTIES OF ALGIERS UNIVERSITY ON
ARABIZATION ISSUE (REFTEL) END QUIETLY ON MAY
7. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, LIFE AT AFFECTED FACUL-
TIES NOW BACK TO NORMAL.

2. SOURCE ADDS THAT BOUMEDIENE, NATIONAL POPULAR
ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT BITAT AND ACTING FLN CHIEF
MESSAADIA RECEIVED DELEGATION OF PROTESTORS IN
LATE APRIL OR EARLY MAY. BOUMEDIENE REPORTEDLY
LISTENED TO STUDENTS' DEMANDS THAT STATE COM-
PANIES OFFER ARABISTS EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
EQUAL TO THOSE EXTENDED TO FRENCH-TRAINED STUDENTS
AND RESPONDED SIMPLY THAT REGIME WAS DOING ALL
IT COULD TO PUSH ARABIZATION. MESSAADIA, A
LEADING ARABIST, ALSO SAID TO HAVE MADE SYMPATHETIC
NOISES. HOWEVER, DELEGATION RECEIVED NO SPE-
CIFIC PROMISES.

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3. AT TIME OF CALL ON PRESIDENT, SOURCE SAYS,
DELEGATION ALSO MET WITH NEWLY APPOINTED PRE-
SIDENCY SECY GEN ALAHOUM. AT LATTER'S REQUEST,
STUDENTS GAVE THEIR NAMES, AND WERE THEN INFORMED
THAT THEY WOULD BE HELD PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE IF,
AS PROTESTERS HAD DEMANDED, DEMONSTRATION MOVED

OFF CAMPUS. DELEGATION LEFT PRESIDENCY WITH IMPRESSION THAT IF UNIVERSITY LIFE DID NOT RETURN TO NORMAL QUICKLY, THEY WOULD BE IN TROUBLE, AND THEY THEREFORE CALLED FOR PROTEST TO END IN SUBSEQUENT STUDENT MEETINGS. ALTHOUGH SOME WHO HAD NOT RECEIVED ALAHOUM TREATMENT DEMANDED THAT STRIKE GO ON, MODERATES CARRIED DAY. SOURCE SAID THAT DELEGATION COWED BY ITS MEETING WITH ALAHOUM.

3. DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT OF SOCIALIST REVOLUTION PARTY (PRS) IN DISORDER, AND MOHAMED BOUDIAF'S ROLE IN PARTY, STILL NOT CLEAR TO US. PRS WAS PLAINLY ACTIVE IN DEMONSTRATION, BUT ITS CLANDESTINITY PREVENTED OUR SOURCE FROM DETERMINING WHETHER STRIKE'S LEADERS WERE PARTY MEMBERS. WE NOTE FROM MOROCCAN PRESS THAT BOUDIAF STILL CONSIDERS HIMSELF HEAD OF PRS, BUT HIS NAME SELDOM HEARD HERE AND MOST YOUTHS WHO PARTICIPATED IN STRIKE APPARENTLY NOT AWARE OF HIS CONNECTION WITH PRS.

4. COMMENT: REGIME'S HANDLING OF DEMONSTRATION WAS SUCCESSFUL BLEND OF CARROT AND STICK. STUDENTS AT LEAST GOT ALL THE WAY TO PRESIDENT, EVEN IF HE COULD NOT DO MUCH TO MEET THEIR DEMANDS. SUBSEQUENT PRIVATE THREATS BY ALAHOUM PREVENTED PUBLIC CONFRONTATION WHICH MIGHT HAVE OCCURRED HAD STRIKE CONTINUED.

5. IN LAST ANALYSIS, APPARENT MODERATION OF
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UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SEEMS TO HAVE ASSURED SUCCESS FOR REGIME, AT LEAST IN SHORT RUN. EARLIER REGIME TOUGHNESS TOWARDS DEMONSTRATIONS HAS NOT YET BEEN FORGOTTEN, AND UNTIL NOW, STUDENTS HERE HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY SURE OF SECURING REASONABLE JOB UPON GRADUATION. HOWEVER, THERE ARE GROWING SIGNS THAT GRADUATES OF ALGERIAN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING BECOMING DRUG ON MARKET, AND THIS MAY LEAD TO SHARPENING OF STUDENT PROTESTS IN FUTURE. LYNE

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